RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

MAR 1 0 2009

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 13-16, 18, and 19 without prejudice or disclaimer and amend the claims as follows:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a steel for use in a high strength pinion shaft comprising:

providing a steel comprising:

0.45wt% - 0.55wt% C;

0.21wt%-0.45wt% Si

0.50wt% - 1.20wt% Mn;

0.025wt% or less P;

0.025wt% or less S;

0.15wt% - 0.25wt% Mo;

0.0005wt% - 0.005wt% B;

0.005wt% 0.10wt% Ti;

0.015wt% or less N; and

a balance comprising Fe and impurities

hot rolling said steel at a temperature of 700°C to 850°C under a draft ratio at an area reduction of 10% or more to obtain a steel comprising a 3-phase texture of ferrite + pearlite + bainite; and

high frequency hardening the steel, ~~and~~

wherein the steel is devoid of Cr, Cu, Ni and Al,

wherein a hardness of said steel before the high frequency rolling and after hot rolling comprises a range of 24 HRC to 30 HRC,

wherein a surface hardness of said steel after said high frequency hardening comprises 650 HV or more, and

wherein a pearlite block size of the steel is 100 μm or less as a circle equivalent diameter.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing a steel for use in a high strength pinion shaft according to claim 9, further comprising one or more of 0.20wt% or less Nb, 0.20wt% or less Ta, and 0.10wt% or less Zr instead of a portion of said Fe.

12-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) A method of manufacturing a steel for use in a high strength pinion shaft according to claim 9, wherein said steel is fabricated or worked under a temperature in a range of 700°C to 850°C.

18-21. (Canceled)